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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SAM BROWNBACK, a Senator from the State of Kansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The prayer will be offered by the guest Chaplain, the Very Reverend Nathan D. Baxter of Washington National Cathedral.

### PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

*The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our strength.—Psalm 46:7.*

O God, who is our strength, we begin the work of this day as servants of our Nation's people and stewards of democracy. We pray Thy blessings of courage and wisdom for the Members of the Senate, its officers and staff. So guide them in the work of this day, that our liberties may be preserved, the wellbeing of all our people advanced, and that in all things, You, O God, the author of liberty, may be glorified. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable Senator SAM BROWNBACK led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, June 4, 2003.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable SAM BROWNBACK, a Senator from the State of Kansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. BROWNBACK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, there will be a period of morning business until 11 a.m. There are several legislative and executive matters that the Senate will consider during today's session.

Following morning business, it is possible that the Senate will resume consideration of the Defense authorization bill, as provided under the consent agreement of May 23. Under that order, we should be able to finish action on that bill within a couple of hours and then send it to conference with the House.

We will also resume consideration of the Energy legislation today. We made very good progress on the ethanol issue yesterday. However, I understand that additional amendments will be offered on that matter. It is my hope that Members offer their ethanol amendments so the Senate can then begin to consider other energy-related amendments.

In addition, discussions are underway to devise a process for consideration of the child tax credit legislation, as we talked about yesterday on the floor. We are now discussing the best way to address this very important issue. It will be addressed and, over the course of the morning, a final decision will be made on what is the fairest and most

efficient way to address the child tax credit legislation.

The chairman of the Finance Committee introduced his legislation yesterday and is working with many colleagues on the best course of action so that we can expeditiously consider that bill.

We are also working to clear additional nominations during today's session. Members should expect votes throughout the day, and Senators will be notified when the first vote is scheduled. I am going to make a very brief statement on Medicare. I will proceed with that and then we can proceed in morning business.

### MEDICARE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, 5 years ago, this body launched a bipartisan commission on Medicare with the purpose of addressing both the short-term, mid-term, and long-term challenges we have with sustaining Medicare, preserving Medicare, and strengthening Medicare. That bipartisan commission did develop a solid bipartisan proposal. Since 1999, the Senate Finance Committee has held 29 hearings on Medicare, and 7 of those hearings specifically focused on adding a prescription drug benefit to Medicare coverage.

We have discussed the issue, we have debated the issue, we have dissected it, and we have deliberated on the issue of Medicare modernization and Medicare improvement for years now—for 6 years since we first began talking about the Medicare commission.

I sincerely believe that the stars are aligned for legislative action and a vote to preserve Medicare and strengthen and improve it and address the prescription drugs issue right now, this month. It is now time for us not to just talk about the issue again but to act on the issue.

Since I became majority leader, I have made it clear that it would be my intention to address the issue using the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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